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SIPDIS

NOFORN

DEPARTMENT FOR DS/IP/ITA, DS/IP/NEA, S/CT

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TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PTER](#) [COUNTER](#) [TERRORISM](#)

SUBJECT: FEBRUARY 9, 2004, SECURITY ENVIRONMENT PROFILE
QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE

REF: A. SECSTATE 28688

[1](#)B. SANAA 2534

[1](#)C. SANAA 1945

[1](#)D. SANAA 2440

[1](#)E. SANAA 2434

[1](#)F. SANAA 375

[1](#)G. SANAA 521

Classified By: DCM Alan G. Misenheimer for reasons 1.5 (b) and (d)

POLITICAL VIOLENCE

[1](#)1. (S/NF) Demonstrations

[1](#)A. Are there any ethnic or religious communities in country that are capable of carrying out significant anti-American demonstrations?

There are not organized, clearly defined communities as such, but ad hoc groupings of Yemeni Muslims are predisposed to oppose U.S. policy in Palestine/Israel, Iraq and elsewhere, and occasionally demonstrate to express their views.

[1](#)B. Have there been anti-American demonstrations in the country within the last 12 months?

There were small demonstrations at mosques in Sanaa (not sure about other places) to protest al-Moayad's extradition to the U.S. in Fall 2003.

Since September 2003, there have been regular reports, in the press and from other sources, of arrests following clashes between police and worshippers at the Grand Mosque in Sanaa. The disturbances during sermons include protesters shouting "death to America death to Israel" and other anti-American and anti-Jewish slogans.

On March 21, 2003, a march of 5-7,000 people protesting the war in Iraq was stopped by police approximately 1/4 mile from the U.S. Embassy; the demonstrators initiated violent confrontations that resulted in the death of several police and protesters.

In March, 2003, Yemenis held several demonstrations opposing war in Iraq, most near the UN headquarters complex in Sanaa, Tahrir Square and Old Airport Road, all several miles from the Embassy.

In Winter 2002 - 2003, Yemeni women held demonstrations in front of the German Embassy protesting the arrest of Sheikh al-Moayed in Frankfurt, Germany, on terrorism charges.

[1](#)C. Have these demonstrations taken place near or in front of U.S. diplomatic facilities?

The usual sites for anti-American gatherings are in areas of Sanaa away from the Embassy; however, the above-mentioned March 21, 2003 event took place nearby.

[1](#)D. What is the average size of an anti-American demonstration?

Depending on the location, up to several hundred people. Peaceful demonstrations protesting the war in Iraq have ranged from approximately 1,000 to 100,000, by some media accounts. Local press routinely carry inflated estimates ranging from half a million to one million-plus.

[1](#)E. Are these anti-American demonstrations usually triggered by U.S. foreign policy initiatives, military actions, or by domestic issues?

U.S. foreign policy initiatives and military/law enforcement counter-terrorism endeavors, as well as ROYG cooperation with same.

[1](#)F. Are these demonstrations generally violent or peaceful?

Generally peaceful. Demonstrations must be coordinated and approved by ROYG in advance; consequently, the vast majority

are peaceful. If not approved in advance, ROYG forces will disband a demonstration.

1G. If violent, have any demonstrations resulted in damage to USG property or injuries to USG employees?

No; however, Yemeni police and protester fatalities in March 2003 were due in large part to the intervention of host government security protecting the U.S. Embassy.

1H. If violent, have any demonstrations ever penetrated our perimeter security line?

No.

1I. Have there been anti-government demonstrations in the country within the last 12 months?

Yes, directed at specific policies, including child labor, education and bringing mosques under government control. Several anti-government demonstrations occurred in Sanaa and Aden.

1J. Have these demonstrations taken place near or in front of U.S. diplomatic facilities?

No.

1K. What is the average size of an anti-government demonstration?

Fairly small, approximately 50 to 200 individuals, similar to anti-U.S. protests.

1L. Are these demonstrations generally violent or peaceful?

Generally peaceful.

1M. If violent, have any demonstrations resulted in damage to USG property?

No.

12. (S/NF) Macro Conflict Conditions

1A. Is the host country currently engaged in an interstate or intrastate conflict?

No, Yemen is not engaged in any ongoing internal or external conflict. Host country is cooperating with U.S. efforts to identify and stop/attack terrorist targets within Yemen. In this regard, the ROYG has demonstrated willingness to engage in fairly large-scale police/military operations against identified terrorist individuals or cells -- e.g. in Abyan in July 2003 and February/March 2004.

1B. If an intrastate conflict, is it an insurgency that is limited to a specific region or a country-wide civil war?

N/A

1C. If limited to a specific region, are any U.S. diplomatic facilities located in this region?

N/A

1D. Have any of the factions involved in these intrastate conflicts signaled or demonstrated an anti-American orientation?

N/A

13. (S/NF) Host Country Capabilities

1A. Are law enforcement agencies professional and well-trained?

U.S. assistance has enabled Yemen to develop a competent counter-terrorism strike force (see below), but regular police/law enforcement are often corrupt, poorly trained and underpaid. For example, an average officer earns 60 USD per month. A captain with 20 years experience earns only 120 per month. A Brigadier General earns 300 USD per month. This economic condition -- reflecting Yemen's widespread poverty (average per capita income is less than USD 400 countrywide) -- fosters widespread corruption that possibly could be diminished with increased remuneration.

Further, law enforcement agencies face numerous challenges regarding planning, coordination and execution of complex counter-terrorism operations. Reliance on manpower is emphasized over the use of technology. Agencies have difficulty maintaining operations security and have difficulty operating in a nighttime environment.

On the other hand, Yemeni law enforcement agencies have shown a willingness to cooperate with U.S. and Western law

enforcement agencies -- e.g. in the relatively proficient forensic investigation of the M/V Limburg attack in October 2002. The United States has provided equipment and extensive training to the Central Security Forces (CSF), a para-military unit of the Ministry of Interior.

In mid-September 2003, the ROYG disrupted an al-Qaeda-affiliated cell operating in Sanaa targeting Western interests. The cell was headed by Afghanistan-trained Amr al-Sharif. The government provided further information on the ROYG's investigation into the cell's activities and members, particularly information on several arrests in Yemen and Saudi Arabia. (Note: see answer to Transnational Terrorist Indicators question 6B for additional information).

In cooperation with Yemeni officials, the FBI actively participated in the investigation of the December 30, 2002 shootings of three American health care workers in Jibla. The perpetrators -- Abed Abdulrazak al-Kamel, the shooter, and Ali Ahmed Mohamed Jarallah, the planner -- were tried, convicted and sentenced to death in separate trials in 2003. On December 1, 2003, a three-judge panel affirmed the death sentence of al-Kamel, who will appeal the decision to the Yemen Supreme Court. Court officials expect that the conviction will be upheld and passed to President Saleh, who is likely sign off on the order to carry out the sentence. Post representatives attended al-Kamel's trial and appeal proceedings, which were relatively transparent and openly reported in the local media.

Al-Kamel coordinated the attack with Ali al-Jarallah, who was convicted of both the Amcit murders and the assassination of Yemeni Socialist Party Deputy Secretary-General Jarallah Omar in a separate trial in Sanaa in October 2003. Al-Jarallah is also expected to appeal his conviction and sentence. No specific date has been set for the executions.

1B. Have they been trained by U.S. agencies?

Some officers have received DS/ATA training, however, the full impact of this training will be manifest only over the long term. The Regional Security Office does maintain high-level contacts within the Ministry of Interior who received ATA training.

In July - August 2003, 24 host government police investigators from across the country participated in a two-week DS/ATA Terrorist Crime Scene investigation course taught by Evidence Response Team FBI special agents.

The CSF is the counter-terrorism (CT) arm of the Central Security Organization (CSO). The CSF has been equipped by the U.S. and trained by U.K./U.S. personnel for the past year and will continue into the next fiscal year. They are ROYG's intended primary CT force.

In June 2003, the newly-formed CSF CT unit was dispatched to the Hattat mountains in Abyan province ostensibly to hunt down and bring to justice those responsible for an attack on a Red Crescent medical convoy the week before. However, this was a cameo appearance. In fact, front-line CSO troops were actually engaged. CSO troops were at the lead of this effort when Ministry of Defense forces became bogged down by harassing gunfire from the surrounding hills. Over a three day period, CSO troops engaged those responsible and completed their mission. CSO was sent out the following week to complete mop-up operations.

Per reftel G, beginning in early March 2004, Yemeni counter-terrorism operations were conducted by the CSF and Ministry of Defense forces in the Abyan region for approximately one week. Yemeni authorities informed Post of the capture of al-Qaeda element Raouf Naseeb on March 3, 2004. The Minister of Interior and Yemen Special Operations Forces commander noted on March 8, 2004, the capture of four USS Cole escapees from Aden prison.

1C. Are law enforcement agencies confronted with serious, widespread corruption inside their agencies?

Yes, see question 3A.

1D. Are the intelligence services professional and capable of deterring terrorist actions?

The intelligence services are moderately professional. Despite ongoing engagement and considerable CT successes, they have limited capability.

1E. Have the intelligence services been cooperative with U.S. Embassy requests or information and support?

Yes, but often grudgingly. Intelligence services rarely volunteer information. Yet on some occasions the ROYG takes the initiative to inform the USG of CT developments -- e.g. in the case of ROYG success in September 2003 in disrupting a

Sanaa-based al-Qaeda cell.

1F. Assuming there have been significant terrorist threats in recent years, have host country security services been able to score any major anti-terrorism successes?

Yes.

1G. Has host country been responsive (re: timeliness and allocation of resources) to Embassy requests for protective security?

Yes.

1H. How does the Embassy assess the overall security at major airports in the country?

Poor, but the ROYG is receptive to additional U.S.-funded equipment and security training. This view is corroborated by an October 2003 visit to Sanaa by a two-person Transportation Security Administration assessment team.

1I. How effective are customs and immigration controls agencies?

Ineffective but improving. Since February 2002, Somali and Ethiopian refugees have been entering Yemen at a reported rate of approximately 1,500 per month, adding to the 60,000 refugees previously registered. They are settling on the southern and western coasts, forming criminal and prostitution rings along clan lines. Criminal related violence is on the rise. With USG assistance, the customs and immigration services are attempting to standardize and modernize equipment and coverage.

1J. How effective are border patrol forces?

In the recent past ineffective; however, a current surge of more than 7,000 troops from MOI/MOD resources and increased cooperation by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (to include collaboration on intelligence and smuggling information) has generally improved the effectiveness of border patrol forces.

INDIGENOUS TERRORISM

14. (S/NF) Anti-American Terrorist Groups

1A. Are there indigenous, anti-American terrorist groups in country?

Yes.

1B. If yes, how many?

Four are known: Aden-Abyan Islamic Army (AAIA); Yemen Islamic Jihad; al-Qaeda Sympathizers; Yemen Hizballah.

1C. Have these groups carried out anti-American attacks within the last 12 months?

No.

1D. Were any of these lethal attacks?

N/A.

1E. Have these groups attacked U.S. diplomatic facilities?

N/A.

1F. Have these groups attacked U.S. business, U.S. military, or related targets?

N/A.

1G. Have these groups limited their attacks to specific regions or do they operate country-wide?

N/A.

1H. If their attacks are limited to regions, are there any U.S. diplomatic facilities located in these regions?

N/A.

15. (S/NF) Other Indigenous Terrorist Groups

1A. Are there other indigenous terrorist groups (not anti-American) in country?

Yes.

1B. If yes, how many?

Two: National Liberation Front (MAWJ) and the Right to

Self-Determination Movement (HATM).

1C. Have these groups carried out attacks in the capital or in areas where U.S. diplomatic facilities are located?

No known incidents of this type.

1D. Were these attacks lethal and/or indiscriminate?

None known.

1E. Have any Americans ever been killed or injured in these attacks?

No.

TRANSNATIONAL TERRORISM

16. (S/NF) Transnational Terrorist Indicators

1A. Are there any foreign terrorist groups that have a presence in country?

Yes. Al-Qaeda, Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ), al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya (AKA: The Islamic Group), Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), Algerian Islamic Group GIA), Salafi Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, PFLP, Hizballah. The Iraqi Intelligence Service maintained a presence in Yemen prior to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In late February 2004, information indicated that the militant wing of PLO faction al-Fatah was at a meeting/seminar hosted by Kan'an, a charity that supports Palestinian causes.

1B. How does the EAC assess this presence? Is it an operational cell? Financial cell? Support cell? Propaganda cell?

Al-Qaeda: all of the above. Other groups may have links or cooperate with al-Qaeda.

Per reftels D and E, on 09/28/2003, the ROYG Minister of Interior held a meeting with the U.S. Ambassador and various other Western ambassadors to discuss ROYG's disruption of a Sanaa-based al-Qaeda cell targeting U.S. other Western and Yemeni objectives. Highlighted was the targeting of the U.S. Ambassador's motorcade and the British Embassy in Sanaa.

Per reftel F, on 02/14/2004, ROYG Minister of Interior held a meeting with the U.S. Ambassador to advise that ROYG officials were investigating a possible plot to attack the Ambassador.

1C. Is the host government sympathetic to these groups?

The Yemeni government is an active partner of the USG in the war against al-Qaeda and affiliated groups. ROYG officially supports Palestinian groups, including Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Hizballah, but support is mainly rhetorical and does not extend to operational activities.

1D. Are there suspect non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the country that have a relationship with any of these groups?

Per reftel C:

Organization, Nationality.

- Al-Haramain al-Sharifain Foundation, Saudi Arabia
- Al-Ihsan Association, Saudi Arabia
- World Assembly for Muslim Youth, Saudi Arabia
- Dar al-Arqam Stationary for Printing and Publication, Saudi Arabia
- Islamic Relief Organization, Saudi Arabia
- Dubai Charitable Association, Saudi Arabia
- Abu-Baker Salem Al-Sa'ari Foundation, Saudi Arabia
- Supreme Authority for Muslims of Bosnia, Saudi Arabia
- Tibah Foundation, Saudi Arabia
- Saeed Qahtan Foundation, Saudi Arabia
- International Islamic Relief Organization, Saudi Arabia
- League of the Islamic World, Saudi Arabia
- Charitable Association in Fujaira, Saudi Arabia
- Al-Bir Islamic Committee, Saudi Arabia
- Zahra Al-Khalidiah Foundation, Saudi Arabia
- Salem Omar Ba'ashem and Omar Badahda, Saudi Arabia
- Mecca Association, Saudi Arabia
- Al-Emir al-Khairiyah Committee (Al Haramain), Saudi Arabia
- Islamic Union (Quebec), Saudi Arabia
- Hamoud al-Hayyawi Foundation, Saudi Arabia
- Al-Noor Charitable Foundation, Saudi Arabia
- Bin Saynoon Foundation, Saudi Arabia
- Bin Mahdi Foundation, Saudi Arabia

-- Bayelghoum Foundation, Saudi Arabia
-- Al-Fittrah Foundation, UAE
-- Al-Islah And Tawhid Social Association, UAE
-- Kuwait Joint Committee for Relief of the Global Islamic Charitable Organization, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait
-- United Arab Emirates Association, UAE
-- Bayt al-Shariqa al-Khairi (Sharja Charitable House), UAE
-- Omar Bin Yousuf, UAE
-- Qatar Charitable Association, Qatari
-- Islamic Relief, UK
-- Dubai Charitable Association, UAE
-- Al-Fikrah Center, UAE
-- Al-Islah Association, Kuwait

1E. Are there any ethnic or religious communities in country that are sympathetic to these groups?

Public sympathy for pro-Palestinian/anti-Israeli groups is widespread.

1F. How does the EAC assess the level, intent, and scope of hostile intelligence services (Iran, Iraq, Syria, Serbia, Sudan, et. al.) in country relative to potential anti-American terrorist acts?

Foreign hostile intelligence services, e.g. Syria, are primarily focused on information gathering for their own countries' interests, not to assist anti-American groups in country with terrorist activity.

1G. How does the EAC assess the availability of weapons and explosives in country or from nearby countries for hostile terrorist elements?

Yemen likely has among the highest number of weapons per capita in the world, with easy access to varieties of explosives. Weapons and explosives are easily attainable. Gun markets are large and well stocked.

Though Yemen is awash in numerous types of weapons, the Yemeni cabinet approved a series of amendments to a 1992 gun control law intended to bolster regulation of weapons possession and trafficking. These amendments must gain approval by the Yemeni Parliament before becoming law. Parliamentary opposition to the amendments remains significant; more than 150 MPs have reportedly signed a petition to quash the gun control law that is still under discussion. Accordingly, Speaker of the Parliament Sheikh Abdullah al-Ahmar has publicly described possession of weapons as a Yemeni symbol of manhood.

In a separate effort, the ROYG has initiated a weapons buy-back program, at a reported cost of 38 million USD, intended to acquire Man Portable Air Defense Systems (MANPADS), rocket propelled grenades (RPGs) and a variety of other heavy weapons from civilian weapons markets. Citing the acquisition of over 1,400 MANPADS from January to June 2003, ROYG says the program is a success. There are problems, however, such as: 1) cataloguing weapons; 2) ROYG paying over market value; and 3) the sustainability of the weapons buy-back program.

HULL